

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-57-00

September 7, 2000

The following is offered in response to your letter to me dated August 25, 2000 in which you request a formal interpretation of Section 505.4 of the BOCA National Building Code/1996 portion of the 1999 State Building Code.

Question: A mezzanine in an unlimited area building contains toilet and locker rooms, a lunch room, one small office and a lounge. This mezzanine is also separated from an adjacent open mezzanine by an 8" CMU wall. Will installing a hollow metal and glass wall system in the lunch room, lounge and office allow this mezzanine to be considered open, thereby allowing the mezzanine to be constructed with a single means of egress?

Answer: No, since the occupant load of the mezzanine in question exceeds ten occupants. In order for a mezzanine to be considered open, the entire perimeter that fronts on the room it is located in must be open and unobstructed to the room below except for walls not more than 42 inches high, columns and posts. The scenario you describe would result in spaces within the mezzanine where the occupants had no visual contact with the room below. Two means of egress are required from the mezzanine you describe, with one of those means of egress providing direct access to an exit from the mezzanine level.